

A life jacket, like a seat belt in a vehicle, will serve no purpose in protecting you and your family from serious injury or death if it is not used. It should fit properly, be designed for the specific use and be comfortable enough to encourage the wearer to use it at all times while on a moving vessel. Your life jacket should always be within reach any time you are on a boat.

To ensure that you and your loved ones will always be protected on the water, we offer the following tips for selecting and using life jackets:

- Buy your own personal life jacket. One size DOES NOT fit all.
- Look at the label. It will provide the weight, size and proper use information.
- Ensure the life jacket has a Strength Test (speed) rating for the intended activity. For example, you DO NOT want to use a life jacket on a PWC that has a speed of 40 mph, if the life jacket is rated for only 20 mph!
- Try it on to check the fit. Once the straps and buckles are secured, it should not slip over your head or come down above your ears.
- Never use water toys in place of an approved life jacket.
- Wear your life jacket to increase your chance of survival in an accident and to set a good example for others.
- Check your life jacket yearly for flotation and fit. Make sure it is still in good condition, with no rips or tears.

**Check the Label for:**

- ✓ Rating Type
- ✓ Intended Use
- ✓ Size & Weight
- ✓ USCG Approved
- ✓ Strength Test



To properly test your life jacket before use, walk into water up to your chest in a supervised area while wearing your life jacket. Draw your feet off the bottom, tilt your head back and allow your body to float in a relaxed manner. Your mouth and nose should be out of the water and you should comfortably float with no effort. If the jacket rides up, secure it more tightly to your body. If it continues to ride up, try a smaller size jacket or a different style.

For proper life jacket care:

- Dry it before storing
- Store it in a cool, well-ventilated area
- Keep it where it can be easily retrieved
- Replace it when signs of wear appear
- Don't alter the jacket
- Don't dry clean or use harsh cleansers
- Don't use direct heat to dry or leave in the sun indefinitely
- Don't use your jacket as a cushion, a kneeling pad or as a boat fender

**GRDA lake rules require all boats to carry United States Coast Guard approved personal flotation devices (PFDs) or life jackets for each person on board. On vessels less than 26 feet in length, while underway, each passenger 12 years of age or younger is also required to wear a PFD, although ALL passengers are encouraged to wear it ALL the time. Anyone operating or riding as a passenger on a personal watercraft (PWC), water skis, sailboard, surfboard, wakeboard, parasail or similar device is also required to wear an approved flotation device.**

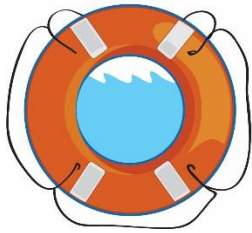
For additional information, call GRDA Police at 918-256-0911.



**LIFE JACKETS SAVE LIVES!**

**A GUIDE TO THE PROPER SELECTION & USE OF LIFE JACKETS**





## Life Jackets Save Lives

**76%** of all fatal boating accident victims drowned.\*  
**Of these, 85%** were not wearing a life jacket.\*

## Types of Life Jackets

There are five different types of Life Jackets or PFDs (Personal Flotation Devices) as established and approved by the United States Coast Guard. Each of these performance types are best utilized for different specific on-water activities and are put into a type category based on a number of factors including buoyancy, the ability of the life jacket to float the user in the face up position, the amount of time the life jacket will be relied upon before rescue, and other variables.

### TYPE I PFD: OFF-SHORE LIFE JACKETS



**TYPE I** This lifejacket is designed for extended survival in rough, open water. It usually will turn an unconscious person face up and has over 22 pounds of buoyancy. This is the best lifejacket to keep you afloat in remote regions where rescue may be slow in coming.

### TYPE II PFD: NEAR-SHORE BUOYANT VESTS



**TYPE II** This "classic" lifejacket comes in several sizes for adults and children and is for calm inland water where there is a chance of fast rescue. It is less bulky and less expensive than a Type I, and many will turn an unconscious person face-up in the water.



### TYPE III PFD: FLOTATION AIDS



**TYPE III** These lifejackets are generally considered the most comfortable, with styles for different boating activities and sports. They are for use in calm water where there is good chance of fast rescue since they will generally not turn an unconscious person face-up. Flotation aids come in many sizes and styles.

### TYPE IV PFD: THROWABLE DEVICES



**TYPE IV** These are designed to be thrown to a person in the water. Throwable devices include boat cushions, ring buoys, and horseshoe buoys. They are not designed to be worn and must be supplemented by wearable lifejacket. It is important to keep these devices immediately available for emergencies, and they should not be used for small children, non-swimmers, or unconscious people.

### TYPE V PFD: SPECIAL USE DEVICE



**TYPE V** Special use lifejackets include work vests, deck suits, and hybrids for restricted use. Hybrid vests contain some internal buoyancy and are inflatable to provide additional flotation.

## Life Jacket Sizes

**Children's Sizes:** Child life jacket sizes are based on weight and are one size fits all for that weight range. There can be overlap between some particular models, so you may need to use a "child" size model for a toddler based on size & weight. When looking to buy, you may think that life jackets for babies would be cheaper since they are smaller, but that is usually not the case. This is mainly due to additional features such as padded head support, handle on the back and crotch strap being added. All very important safety features for the littlest ones. A child's life jacket must fit snugly and cannot be oversized for them to "grow into"!

- Infant/Toddler (8-30 lbs)
- Child (30-50 lbs)
- Youth (50-90 lbs)

### Right Fit

**Snug fit and fastened.**

- You don't want your life jacket too large or too small.



**Adult Sizes:** Unlike child sizes, adult life jackets are measured by chest size. Don't buy an XL life vest because that's the shirt size you wear. For best fit, measure the chest directly under the armpits and all the way around. Then simply select the life jacket size that falls within the range of chest size. While sizing is not universal, here are common sizes for adult life jackets:

- Extra Small (28-32" chest)
- Small (32-36" chest)
- Medium (36-40" chest)
- Large (40-44" chest)
- Extra Large (44-48" chest)
- 2X Large (48-52" chest)
- 3X Large (52-56" chest)

## Have the Right Life Jacket?

### Right Style

Be sure it's U.S. Coast Guard-approved (Check the label printed on the inside of the life jacket.)

